

Airpower integrators make a difference

by **Chief Warrant Officer John Robinson**

19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment

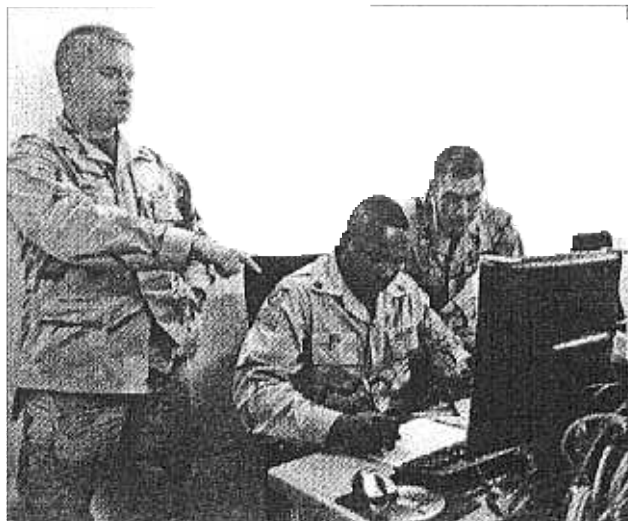
The 19th Battlefield Coordination Detachment recently deployed to support a theater other than its own.

In September, the 19th BCD deployed downrange to perform its wartime mission in support of the Global War on Terror and serve as the Army Forces representative within the Combined Air Operations Center, Central Command Air Forces.

The detachment is embedded there as a tenant unit with the 32nd Air Operations Group, serving as the U.S. Army Europe liaison to U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

"Our men and women have been very active participants in USAFE and USAREUR exercises, literally from the inception of the unit," said Col. Jim Waring, 19th BCD commander. "Performing our wartime mission has simply been a natural extension of that training and experience."

Working alongside coalition allies and sister services, the Soldiers of the 19th BCD are respon-



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Shawn Clements

Soldiers from the 19th Battalion Coordination Detachment, Sgt. 1st Class Ken Lambert, targeting NCO, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Reed, plans NCO, and Lt. Col. Carl Giles, plans chief, work an air support request from Operation Iraqi Freedom forces.

sible for the integration of coalition airpower, airlift and airspace, in support of operations throughout the CENTCOM area of operations.

"This is an extremely well-trained and experienced organization. We are very diversified across

a wide spectrum of branches, military occupational specialties and skills," said Colonel Waring.

"We have a wide cross-section of officers and NCOs," said 19th BCD's Detachment Sgt. Maj. Oscar Lopez-Rivera. "Whether it's aviation, intelligence, field artillery, transportation or signal, we have the capability to plug into any air operations center and represent the Army's interests on day one."

"When you see close air support helping ground forces, we helped coordinate it," said Lt. Col. Carl Giles, 19th BCD chief of plans. "When it comes to airlift flying re-supply or rest and recuperation missions, we are working that, too."

The responsibility is great, but so are the rewards. "This is my first deployment and I can't believe the exposure I'm getting," said Private 1st Class Latrice Barnett, airspace planner. "The experience is more than I could have ever expected, coming straight from Advanced Individual Training."

"Our mission is a critical one," said Colonel Waring, "but we always keep our eye on the ball – the Soldiers on the front line. We're here to support them."